

# Celebrating Christian Mystery

## Discipleship, What does it mean to follow Jesus?

*All the baptized are called to participate in the celebration of Christian mystery. For some this starts with an awareness of being immersed in mystery and then reflecting on the words our Tradition gives us. For others it starts with an awareness that we have reached the limits of what our intellect can teach us, and subsequently being drawn into the wonder and awe of mystery. Immersion into Mystery and Tradition work together to lead us to transformation.*

January 2010

### Adult Faith Formation

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I've heard that the best way to be a disciple is to know one. If we look at discipleship as being an apprentice this makes sense. In baptism we are apprenticed into a life of discipleship – following the master to become like the master. So, what is it that disciples do in order to become who they already are? They watch, they study, they pray, they listen, they question, they imitate, they fail, they persevere, they reconcile, they minister, they suffer, they work for justice, they build community, they learn.

In our baptism we are called to holiness, we are called to worship, we are called to community, we are called to participate and we are called to ministry. Our call to discipleship is not for our own sake, but for the sake of the mission of Jesus Christ – always pointing to the Reign of God – the New Jerusalem where peace and justice kiss.

During the month of January our faith formation will focus on the patterns of our lives and how they reflect our response to our baptismal call to discipleship.

We have a variety of opportunities to reflect on discipleship this month and hope you are able to join us:

Sunday, January 10, Whole Community Sunday – a panel of parishioners will share their perspective on discipleship and how they have responded to the invitation to follow Jesus.

Thursday, January 14 – St. Cecilia's is hosting a social justice event with Alice Hausman. One way to live out discipleship is to participate in the legislative process to work toward a society where each person's rights are realized.

Saturday, January 23 - Movie Night. This is a great/fun opportunity for intergenerational entertainment and faith sharing. All are invited to come together to share a pizza supper, watch a contemporary movie and engage in some theological reflection. This month's feature is Simon Birch (rated PG-13).

Wednesday, January 20, - Whole Community Wednesday. Join a group of parishioners who meet for a light supper and small group discussion around the monthly topic.

Thursday, January 28 – Dr. Ken Snyder will lead a presentation on how Vatican II has shaped the last forty years of our liturgy, and therefore shapes us as disciples.

### Check out the library for some great books on Discipleship:

**Tell Me Your Story** by Art Zannoni  
(The parables of Jesus)

**Jesus of the Gospels: Teacher, Storyteller, Messiah, Friend  
Intimacy With God** by Thomas Keating

**Gandhi, Soldier of Nonviolence** by Calvin Kytle

**Archbishop Romero** by Placido Erdozain

**Living Jesus** by Luke Timothy Johnson

**Women In the Eyes of Jesus** by Antoine Nacheff, STD

**Lazarus at the Table** by Bernie Evans



## Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

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In the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS) adults don't offer lessons to children; adults make presentations. It is assumed that adults continually learn from children as much, or more than, children learn from adults. By listening carefully to children and studying their drawings and writing, adults can gain insights into how children think about God and about their relationship to God.

Good Shepherd children are guided to interpret parables. Children of pre-school age delight in hearing stories and so we tell the parable/story using materials that will be available to the children for work after the presentation. After offering the parable as a spoken story we read the parable to the children from the bible.

"To some extent all of the parables of Jesus address questions of discipleship; they address the issues of how one should live in relationship to Jesus, God and others."  
(Art Zannoni)

In the weeks after Christmas in their first year of CGS, the 3-5 year-olds study five kingdom parables: the mustard seed, the leaven, the pearl of great price, the growing seed, and the parable of the good shepherd. Some of these are described below.

- After telling and reading the parable of the mustard seed to the children we show them mustard seeds and photos of full-grown mustard trees. The mustard seeds are real, not the co-op variety, and so incredibly small that all but the youngest eyes need a magnifying glass to see them. Each child takes a single mustard seed home, taped onto the week's prayer card: "The reign of God is like a mustard seed."
- Before the parable of the leaven is presented, parents are asked to save covered

plastic containers for the students. During this presentation the parable is told as a story, read from the bible, and then interpreted by the children's work. First the children mix bread dough. After the ingredients for dough are mixed, the dough is split between two bowls. Fast-acting yeast is added to only one bowl. The students revisit the bowls at the end of class and speculate on the reason that the bowls of dough are different, relating their discoveries to the parable of the leaven. Each child takes home a piece of leavened dough to bake into bread.

- The parable of the good shepherd is the first to be presented, and the most often repeated. It is read in its simplest form with pre-schoolers; the lost sheep and the hireling are added with older students. The parable is told by moving wooden pieces: a shepherd, his flock of sheep and their pasture. After listening to the story, the children talk with us about how the shepherd cares for his sheep: he calls each sheep by name, he takes his flock to pastures with water and excellent grass, and he keeps them safe when they are away from home. For their work the children retell the parable using the wooden pieces from the presentation.

## Youth News

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Discipleship. Most of us immediately think of discipline when we hear that word. Well, it can mean so much more than that. Join us through out this month to discover what it means to be a disciple. We will have a fun kick off with games and treats and great discussion on Sunday January 3rd at 7pm.

We will continue our journey on January 10th at Whole Community Sunday. I encourage all of you to attend the sessions for your grade or the adult session. It will be a great panel of lay persons from the different orders i.e. Franciscan, Benedictine, Dominican, Jesuit, etc. All of the panel members are fun to listen to and very informative. Feel free to bring your questions and ask them.

Sunday January 17th we will journey to St. Mark's to share

with our fellow disciples in Mass and formation. We will meet at St. C's at 4:30 to head over for Mass. If you would like to just meet us there for the formation we will be in the cafeteria at 6pm. We will be back to St. C's around 8pm. This is a lot of fun and a great way to make new friends or reconnect with old friends.

Don't miss Whole Community Wednesday on the 20th. We will have a chance to share what it means to be a disciple to each of us. This is a great chance to ask questions and share your thoughts. Even if you don't agree with everyone else in the room they love to hear your thoughts and will support you.

As always contact Cindy with questions or to RSVP. You can email her at cndybauer@yahoo.com or call 651-22-2500. I hope to see all of you at least at one of these fabulous events this month. We have so much going on and you have so much to offer.

## Faith Formation K-8

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This month we return to Ordinary Time. The meaning of Ordinary Time has nothing to do with mediocre rituals. Rather, Ordinary Time offers time for us to grow in holiness. It is that part of the liturgical year that corresponds to the events of Jesus' public ministry and focuses on his preaching and healing. It is a great opportunity to examine our call to discipleship in light of Jesus' ministry. Often the New Testament uses the word *disciple* in the sense of pupil, adherent, someone who continues in Jesus' word. In the *Acts of the Apostles* the name *disciple* is used to mean the believers, **all the baptized**, even kids!

Many of us are sitting back, taking a deep breath, and giving thanks that the work and busyness of Christmas has ended.

In reality these coming months are just the opposite; the real work of Christmas is just beginning. The feast of the Baptism of the Lord (this year celebrated on January 10th) is the perfect transition between the Christmas season and Ordinary Time. The baptism of Jesus reminds

us of our own baptism and that we also accept our mission to do good works.

Our mission is to continue the work of Christmas, the work of Jesus, to be His disciples. Jesus identifies himself with the hungry, the stranger, the poor, and the oppressed. Jesus showed us that genuine discipleship is not about words. What really counts is what we do throughout our lives.

Our group of young parishioners preparing for their First Reconciliation on January 22nd will have their Retreat with their parents on January 16th. The theme of our retreat is "Are you Bread or Stone?" Bread is soft and feeds us; it can be broken and shared with others. Stone is hard and cold, it can break things. We are Bread for others; we are Jesus' disciples, when we help others see the goodness and gentleness of Jesus through our thoughts, words and actions. Jesus asks all of us, young and old, to be His eyes, ears, mouth, shoulders, hands and feet here on Earth. There is a wonderful saying that tells us if you want to know where Jesus wants you to be, where God has sent you to be His disciple, to love His people and serve God with your whole heart; go outside and look in your kitchen window. It is here and now in this Ordinary Time.